General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/63/L.63 and Add.1)*]

63/237. Recognition of sickle-cell anaemia as a public health problem

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the need to promote better physical and mental health, bearing in mind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and other relevant human rights instruments,

Welcoming World Health Assembly resolution 59.20 of 27 May 2006[2] and resolution 22 of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of 19 October 2005,[3] and taking note of decision Assembly/AU/Dec.81 (V) adopted by the Assembly of the African Union at its fifth ordinary session, held in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 4 and 5 July 2005,[4]

Recognizing that sickle-cell anaemia is one of the world's foremost genetic diseases, that it has severe physical, psychological and social consequences for those affected and their families, and that in its homozygote form it is one of the most lethal genetic diseases,

Aware of the need for greater international cooperation, including through partnerships, to facilitate access to education, management, surveillance and treatment for sickle-cell anaemia,

Recognizing that proper management of sickle-cell anaemia will contribute to an appreciable decrease in mortality from malaria and in the risk of HIV infection,

Recalling the Abuja Declaration on Roll Back Malaria in Africa of 25 April 2000[5] and the global "Roll Back Malaria" initiative,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See World Health Organization, *Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly, Geneva, 22–27 May 2006, Resolutions and Decisions, Annexes* (WHA59/2006/REC/1).

[3] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Thirty-third Session, Paris, 3–21 October 2005*, vol. 1: *Resolutions*, chap. V.

[4] See African Union, documents Assembly/AU/Dec.73–90 (V), Assembly/AU/Decl.1–3 (V) and Assembly/AU/Resolution 1 (V).

[5] See A/55/240/Add.1, annex.

Taking note of the reports of the first, second and third international congresses of the Sickle Cell Disease International Organization, held in Paris on 25 and 26 January 2002, in Cotonou from 20 to 23 January 2004 and in Dakar from 22 to 24 November 2006, respectively, and the report of the first global consultations on sickle-cell anaemia, held in Brazzaville from 14 to 17 June 2005,

Recognizing that education, information and communication technologies should play a crucial role in preventing sickle-cell anaemia and that there is an urgent need to create effective research and training programmes in the countries most affected by this disease,

1. *Recognizes* that sickle-cell anaemia is a public health problem;

2. *Underlines* the need to raise public awareness about sickle-cell anaemia and to eliminate harmful prejudices associated with the disease;

3. *Urges* Member States and the organizations of the United Nations system to raise awareness of sickle-cell anaemia on 19 June each year at the national and international levels;

4. *Encourages* Member States, as well as United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, international institutions and development partners, to support health systems and primary health-care delivery, including efforts to improve the management of sickle-cell anaemia;

5. *Invites* Member States, international organizations and civil society to support the efforts being made to combat sickle-cell anaemia, including as part of health-system strengthening efforts, in the various development programmes, and to encourage basic and applied research on the disease;

6. *Urges* the Member States in which sickle-cell anaemia is a public health problem to establish national programmes and specialized centres for the treatment of sickle-cell anaemia and to facilitate access to treatment;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to bring the présent resolution to the attention of all Member States and organizations of the United Nations system.

73rd plenary meeting
22 December 2008